

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:  
ARMED SERVICES  
BUDGET  
ENERGY AND  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
INTELLIGENCE  
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

November 18, 2016

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate, S-230  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Senate Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate, S-221  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives, H-232  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
House Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives, H-204  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senate Majority Leader McConnell, Senate Minority Leader Reid, Speaker of the House Ryan, and House Minority Leader Pelosi:

It is my understanding that the Majority in both houses has decided to scrap the work which has been done on the remaining appropriations bills and instead offer another short-term continuing resolution. While continuing resolutions are sometimes appropriate, in the current circumstance I find this an inexplicable abdication of one of our most fundamental responsibilities. This is especially egregious because the topline number has been agreed upon, the allocations made, and the detailed work of the Appropriations Committees is essentially complete.

As you know, passing a budget resolution and annual appropriations bills on time is not only one of the most basic responsibilities of the United States Senate, but it is also one of the most important. The priorities set by a budget resolution that are reflected in federal funding bills can spur economic growth, and our continued dereliction of duty in not dealing with the regular federal funding bills on time can also contribute to economic stagnation. In fact, a multitude of economists and other experts have repeatedly testified before our committees that the short-term spending bills we continue to rely on to run the country are anathema to the stability that a regular budget process could provide. Operating under a short-term continuing resolution also makes it difficult for our federal agencies to efficiently plan and administer programs. Tossing agency planning out the window in favor of a stopgap approach is an irresponsible way to govern.

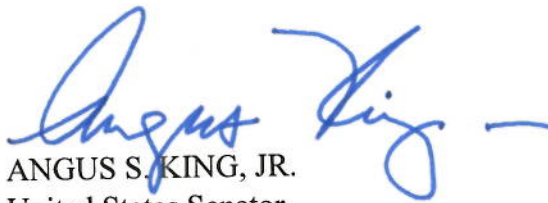
The decision to pass another short-term continuing resolution is also particularly disturbing—and frankly shameful—because the vast majority of the work to complete our appropriations bills is already done. And we did it by old-fashioned bipartisan compromise! And

since Republicans and Democrats agreed to the two-year topline spending numbers in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, Senate leaders have worked to pass out of committee bipartisan appropriations bills that are ready for our final consideration. All that is lacking to push full-year, bipartisan funding bills across the finish line is the will of Congressional leadership. It should only take us a couple of hours.

It is no wonder that the American people hold this institution in such low regard. Our negligence in what must be considered at this point a willful refusal to pass critical federal funding bills should embarrass us, not only because of the very real detrimental impacts it has on the country, but also because it continues to erode the integrity of the Senate and the will of the American people.

I deeply hope that we can reverse course on this disappointing decision and finally do our job and pass the full-year appropriations bills that are ready and required for the economic growth and security of our country.

Sincerely,



ANGUS S. KING, JR.  
United States Senator